

**REMARKS/ARGUMENTS**

Favorable consideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-4 are presently pending in this application, Claim 1 having been amended by the present amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claim 4 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, for being indefinite; Claims 1-3 and 5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by JP 10-024274 (hereinafter “JP ‘274”); and Claim 4 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over JP ‘274.

With regard to the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, Applicants respectfully submit that a “compound comprising an acid residue derived from the polyester and a residue derived from the crosslinking moiety” is shown in the attached sheet and that the theoretical number of the moles of an acid residue can be calculated based on the theoretical number of the moles of the “acid residue derived from the polyester.” Thus, it is respectfully submitted that Claim 4 is in compliance with the requirements of the statute.

Claim 1 has been amended herein. These amendments find support in the specification, claims and drawings as originally filed, and no new matter is believed to be added thereby. If, however, the Examiner disagrees, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned who will be happy to work in a joint effort to derive mutually satisfactory claim language.

Before addressing the rejection based on the cited reference, a brief review of Claim 1 as currently amended is believed to be helpful. Claim 1 is directed to a method for decomposing a plastic and recites “treating a thermosetting resin which comprises a polyester and its crosslinking moiety, with subcritical water of a temperature lower than the thermal decomposition temperature of the thermosetting resin; and recovering a compound

comprising an acid residue derived from the polyester and a residue derived from the crosslinking moiety, obtained from the treating of the thermosetting resin.”

It is respectfully submitted that JP ‘274 is not believed to teach or suggest “recovering a compound comprising an acid residue derived from the polyester and a residue derived from the crosslinking moiety, obtained from the treating of the thermosetting resin” as recited in amended Claim 1. Specifically, the process according to Claim 1 includes recovering not only monomers derived from the polyester, which can be recycled as raw materials (monomers) for plastics, but also a “compound comprising an acid residue derived from the polyester and a residue derived from the crosslinking moiety,” which can be used as a raw material for a thermosetting resin, a low shrinking agent, a surfactant, a dispersant, etc.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, JP ‘274 simply states “[a] low to medium molecular weight compd. thus obtained is used in the synthesis of a thermosetting resin” and is not believed to disclose or suggest a concept of recovering such a useful compound, *i.e.*, “a compound comprising an acid residue derived from the polyester and a residue derived from the crosslinking moiety.” Therefore, the subject matter recited in amended Claim 1 is believed to be distinguishable from JP ‘274.

Because JP ‘274 fails to disclose the recovery of the compound as recited in amended Claim 1, its teachings are not believed to render the method recited in Claim 1 obvious.

For the foregoing reasons, Claim 1 is believed to be allowable. Furthermore, since Claims 2-4 depend directly or indirectly from Claim 1, substantially the same arguments set forth above also apply to these dependent claims. Hence, Claims 2-4 are believed to be allowable as well.

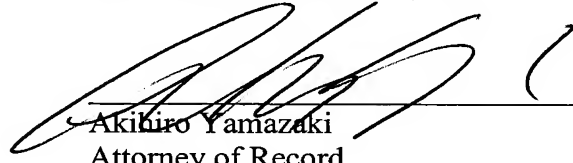
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<sup>1</sup> See, Specification, paragraph [0007].

In view of the amendments and discussions presented above, Applicants respectfully submit that the present application is in condition for allowance, and an early action favorable to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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